

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

July 6, 2020

Members Present: Douglas Baker, Mayor  
Donna Fletcher, Deputy Mayor  
James Johnson  
Samuel Lyons  
Christian Marshall  
Ryan Rudegeair

Members Excused: Fred Mays

In Attendance: Tracy Jamieson, City Manager  
Brian Spaid, Esq., City Solicitor  
Jim Wetzel, Fire Chief  
Kevin Anundson, Police Chief  
Harmony Motter, Finance Director  
Sheila Boughner, Recording Secretary & Community Development  
Sarah Titley, Venango Newspapers, Inc.  
Mike McMullen, 315 Adams St.  
David Ballard, Trails to Ales  
Missy Ditzenberg, 233 Overlook Drive  
Tammy Bible, The Olive Vault  
David Bible, The Olive Vault  
Mike Dulaney, Venango County Commissioner  
Joseph Hart, 312 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Robin Hart, 312 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Ivan Harris, 1214 Elk St.  
Ashley Smith, 1346 Elk St.

Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Resolution No. 73**

Mr. Rudegeair moved to amend the agenda to include approval of the minutes of the 2020 CDBG and CDBG-CV Preliminary Public Hearing of June 8, 2020 and to adopt the agenda as amended. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Resolution No. 74**

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 8, 2020, and of the 2020 CDBG and CDBG-CV Preliminary Public Hearing of June 8, 2020, as presented. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**PAY THE BILLS - Resolution No. 75**

Mr. Rudegeair moved to pay the bills as presented. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion,

which passed unanimously.

**CITIZENS' INQUIRIES** – None.

**CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS** –

Ms. Jamieson presented requests for certificates of appropriateness for:

- **Resolution No. 76** -- Vinyl siding, replacement windows, and a stoop for 117 Feldman Way. The project was recommended for approval by HARB. Mr. Rudegear moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as presented. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 77** -- Paint, a sign and an awning over the door at 1247 Liberty St. The project was recommended for approval by HARB. Mr. Rudegear moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as presented. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 78** -- New fiberglass porch posts at 416 15<sup>th</sup> St. The project was recommended for approval by HARB. Mr. Rudegear moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as presented. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 79** -- Siding, replacement windows, a new roof and porch railings at 312 10<sup>th</sup> St. The project was recommended for approval by HARB with the request that all architectural elements of the structure be retained. Mr. Rudegear moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as presented. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 80** -- A sign and front awning at 1243 Liberty St. HARB recommended the sign for approval but advised that the awning should be smaller so as to not hide the building's features. Mr. Rudegear moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the sign and to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness for the awning. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**PRESENTATION OF 12<sup>th</sup> & LIBERTY STREET INTERSECTION STUDY – PREFERRED OPTIONS** --

Ms. Jamieson presented, for the Council's review, the draft study of the 12<sup>th</sup> & Liberty Street intersection, highlighting the proposed improvements for that intersection arrived at by PennDOT's engineering consultants and the project Steering Committee. The proposed measures will increase safety and calm traffic in the area; accommodate multiple modes of travel including pedestrians and bicyclists in addition to motorists; add parking; and add green space. These were arrived at after consideration of four options. The options included: (1) four lanes with realignment of the intersection to the south; the preferred option – (2) three lanes with realignment to the south; (3) a roundabout – which offered the most benefits but was also the most expensive option; and (4) three lanes with realignment to the north. The preferred

option will reduce the pedestrian crossing by 20 feet, add six parking spaces, and improve the safety of the intersection. Related improvements selected as preferred options by the Steering Committee include: re-striping Liberty between 11<sup>th</sup> and South Park streets for three lanes with a center turn lane; making 12<sup>th</sup> Street between Liberty and Buffalo one-way, which add more green space and 5 more parking spaces; and adding bike lanes to the 1200 block of Liberty. Mr. Rudegear advised that he heard from several business owners who indicated that if 12<sup>th</sup> Street between Liberty and Buffalo is made one-way, it would be better to have traffic flow from Liberty to Buffalo.

He asked if cost and public opposition were the reasons for not selecting the roundabout as the preferred option. Mr. McMullen, a former PennDOT engineer and City resident who served on the Steering Committee, explained that while the roundabout offers the most benefits, in terms of safety and traffic flow, it costs \$5 million and is not vastly better than the preferred option, which costs \$1.6 million less. Mr. McMullen indicated that the intersection improvements (and related improvements) could possibly be added to an upcoming PennDOT betterment project on Liberty Street, but there are no guarantees, given the impact of the pandemic on state budgets – including PennDOT's, which is partially funded by a gas tax. If not, it could take years for the project to materialize. But having a viable project on the books is a start.

Ms. Jamieson said she did not need a formal resolution from council but just wanted to make sure the preferred options were acceptable before the study is finalized. Council members indicated their support for the preferred options, as outlined.

#### **REQUEST BY TRAILS TO ALES FOR SIDEWALK TABLES -- Resolution No. 81**

Council heard a request from David Ballard of Trails to Ales for permission to place six tables on the brick area of the sidewalk in front of the brew pub to help make up for the loss of seating inside due to social distancing requirements. He indicated the tables would be placed outside as necessary at peak times and would be taken inside by 9 p.m. at the latest. Mr. Rudegear moved to approve the request for sidewalk tables as presented and to recommend that the City Manager permit consumption of alcoholic beverages on that portion of the public sidewalk as a temporary measure to assist the business. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **BUS SHELTER AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PROJECT – BID AWARD – Resolution No. 82**

Ms. Jamieson reported that two bids were received for the Bus Shelter & Pedestrian Access Project in the 1200 block of Buffalo Street and recommended approval of the lower bid from GEM BLDG. Contractors & Development, Inc., in the amount of \$103,743. The project is funded by a State multimodal grant of \$135,850. Mr. Rudegear moved to award the bid to GEM BLDG. Contractors & Development, Inc., in the amount of \$103,743. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **REQUEST TO PLACE ITEMS ON MUNICIBID – Resolution No. 83**

Ms. Jamieson presented a list of items to be offered for sale on the Municibid site including seven police vehicle light bars, four police vehicle cage dividers, six light bar and siren control boxes and one K9 insert for a 2014 Ford Explorer. Mr. Johnson moved to place the items on Municibid. Mr. Ryan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION – BLIGHT REMEDIATION GRANT – Resolution No. 84**

Ms. Jamieson presented a Pennsylvania Housing Alliance grant opportunity the City is looking into that will provide up to \$300,000 for demolition of blighted properties. While the City would be exempt from the requirement for a 10% match, providing a match would earn points in the competitive application process. There is a \$100 application fee. Ms. Jamieson submitted for the Council's approval a resolution authorizing an application should there be time for City staff to pull one together. Mr. Rudegear moved to approve the resolution. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **PARADE AND PARK REQUESTS –**

Ms. Jamieson presented the following requests for uses of the City parks:

- **Resolution No. 85** -- Aug. 29, 2020 (Aug. 30, 2020, rain date) • Bandstand & Fountain Parks • Jordan Ace – Girl Scouts • **Hometown Pride Showcase from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.** (Rescheduled from May 16). Mrs. Fletcher moved and Mr. Lyons seconded a motion to approve the request. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 86** – August 2020 • Bandstand Park • Polk Center Strong • **Informational Rally** (date and time to be determined). Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Rudegear seconded a motion to approve the request. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Resolution No. 87** -- Sept. 10, 2020 • Bandstand Park • Venango County SCA • **Venango County Recovery Celebration 3 to 7 p.m.** Mr. Lyons moved and Mrs. Fletcher seconded a motion to approve the request. Motion passed unanimously.

It was stressed that each applicant is responsible for overseeing any state mandates related to the coronavirus.

#### **REPORTS**

##### **Manager**

- Ms. Jamieson indicated the final public hearing for the CDBG-CV application was postponed until Aug. 3 as the state extended the deadline for the application until the end of August. Ms. Boughner explained that while awaiting additional guidance from HUD and DCED, the City is exploring several possible uses for the funds including: assistance to the three food pantries serving Franklin and the surrounding area; assistance for small businesses impacted by the pandemic; and purchase of personal protective equipment and supplies.
- Reporting on the City's financial status, Ms. Jamieson indicated real estate tax collections are holding steady but enabling taxes are lagging, as was expected in the current economic climate. Revenues are averaging about \$35,000 less than 2018 and 2019 levels. With the City's belt tightening, however, expenditures are also down. The City continues to monitor the situation and expects to have a better sense of the financial outlook in August, assuming there are no new COVID-related developments that affect City revenues.

- Indicated she would need a short executive session for personnel.

#### **Solicitor**

- Reported the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board hearing on the City's petition for an extension of permission to enforce its own noise ordinance in the Central Business District -- in lieu of Section 493(34) of the Liquor Code -- was held on June 24, 2020, at the Barrow-Civic Theatre. He indicated there was no opposition to the extension expressed at the hearing and said he expects the extension will be granted by the end of the month and will be good for three years. After that, the extensions should be good for five years before they must be renewed.

**Mayor • Appointments** -- None.

#### **COUNCIL REPORTS**

##### **Mr. Rudegeair**

- Said he received a complaint about people setting off fireworks in the City. Mr. Spaid indicated the police could handle such complaints under existing laws.
- Suggested the guidelines and procedures for obtaining a permit for recreational fires be posted on the City's website.
- Indicated the bids for the Franklin Public Library's grant-funded roofing project came in too high. Ms. Jamieson indicated she would be meeting with the Library Director to determine the next steps.

##### **Mr. Johnson**

- Said he attended the Black Lives Matter rally in June at Bandstand Park and questioned the motives of those spectators on nearby corners carrying guns, who claimed they were there to protect against outside agitators. Mr. Johnson suggested they were the outside agitators, noting that none of them attended the next day's Flag Day ceremony, and praised the Franklin Police Department's handling of the event, calling the police the real patriots.

##### **Mr. Marshall**

- Asked why the traffic hump was not re-installed on the 1300 block of Otter Street. Ms. Jamieson said that street segment is part of a CDBG paving project that will be put out to bid this summer.
- Asked about the street work underway behind Sander's Market. Ms. Jamieson indicated there was a major water leak there that has been repaired. She said the street would be addressed soon.
- Said he heard positive comments about the Franklin police officer out on bike patrol and said he hopes the patrols continue.

**Mrs. Fletcher**

- Asked if anything can be done to address the deteriorating pavement in the 200 Block of Elk Street. That stretch was to be paved this summer as part of a project funded by Liquid Fuels, but those funds were re-directed as part of the City's response to the health and economic crisis. Ms. Jamieson said something might be done there if funding opens up, and that perhaps the Franklin General Authority might help with repairs to that street, which leads to the sewage treatment plant.

**Mr. Lyons**

- Asked if Code Enforcement was aware of a house surrounded by trash visible from 15<sup>th</sup> Street Hill. Ms. Jamieson said she would find out.

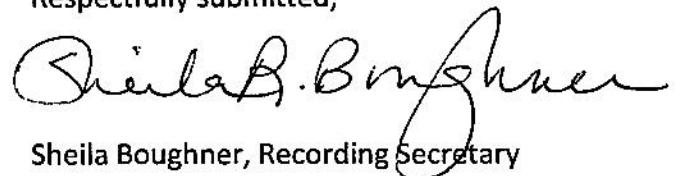
**EXECUTIVE SESSION - Resolution No. 88**

Mr. Rudegeair moved to enter into executive session at 8:15 p.m. to discuss personnel. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The executive session ended at 8:45 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sheila B. Boughner".

Sheila Boughner, Recording Secretary